

of actively carrying on the war in Spain, felt the necessity of removing his troops from Prussia to the Pyrenees. He then hastened the interview at Erfurt, where the two Emperors of France and Russia had agreed to meet. He hoped that this interview would insure the tranquillity of the Continent, while he should complete the subjection of Spain to the sceptre of Joseph. That Prince had been proclaimed on the 8th of June; and on the 21st of the same month he made his entry into Madrid, but having received, ten days after, information of the disaster at Baylen, he was obliged to leave the Spanish capital.<sup>1</sup>

Bonaparte's wishes must at this time have been limited to the tranquillity of the Continent, for the struggle between him and England was more desperate than ever. England had just sent troops to Portugal under the command of Sir Arthur Wellesley. There was no longer any hope of a reconciliation with Great Britain. The interview at Erfurt having been determined on, the Emperor, who had returned from Bayonne to Paris, again left the capital about the end of September, and arrived at Metz without stopping, except for the purpose of reviewing the regiments which were echeloned on his route, and which were on their march from the Grand Army to Spain.<sup>2</sup>

I had heard some time previously of the interview which was about to take place, and which was so memorable in the

<sup>1</sup> The important battle of Baylen, where the French, under General Dupont, were beaten by the Spaniards, was fought on the 19th of July, 1808.

<sup>2</sup> Talleyrand talked a great deal after dinner about Napoleon at Erfurt, where he accompanied him as chamberlain. [He had given up the Foreign Office in August, 1807.] The cordiality amongst the sovereigns was more real at that time than at any other, and the adulation of Napoleon quite extraordinary. As an instance of this he told me that in all the theatrical pieces represented before the sovereigns any possible allusion to Napoleon's history was seized upon and rapturously applauded by all the Kings and Hereditary Princes present (*Leaves from Diary of Henry Greville*, p. 7(5)).

Talleyrand at the time seems to have dreaded Napoleon's plans; thus he tried to induce the Emperor of Austria to attend, saying to Metternich, "The Prince who is not there will have the appearance of being either a neutral or an enemy. The Emperor of Austria cannot be in the first case, for nothing can take place in Europe without his offering either a hindrance or a facility. For myself, I would desire that at the right moment the Emperor Francis should arrive as a hindrance" (*Metternich*, tome ii. p. 270). As to the result of the conferences Metternich (tome ii. p. 288) says, "One truth very evident to me is that the result of the Erfurt conferences has not at all corresponded with the

ideas which were taken there."